

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 070262

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK PRIORITY

INFO COMICEDFOR

CINCLANT PRIORITY

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E. O.11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR, IC, NATO

SUBJECT: ICELAND DEFENSE FORCE (IDF) RETENTION ISSUE

REF: REYKJAVIK 380

1. SUMMARY: WE DO NOT THINK THAT A REQUEST FOR A REPORT FROM THE NAC WOULD NECESSARILY TRIGGER ARTICLE VII, SINCE THIS CAN ONLY BE DONE BY WRITTEN AND FORMAL NOTIFICATION TO THE USG. ARGUMENTATION TO DEAL WITH AGUSTSSON' S OTHER THREE QUESTIONS IS GIVEN BELOW AND IN SEPTEL. END SUMMARY

2. FYI: A DETAILED RESPONSE TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER' S QUESTIONS ON THE PRECISE TIMING OF A POSSIBLE INVOCATION OF ARTICLE VII COULD PROVE TO BE COUNTERPRODUCTIVE, LEADING TO EMBARRASSMENT WHEN THE TALKS ACTUALLY BEGIN. HOWEVER, IF YOU ARE PRESSED ON THIS ISSUE, YOU MAY STATE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 070262

THAT ANY UNILATERAL ACTION WHICH IMPINGES ON THE COHESIVENESS AND SOLIDARITY OF THE ALLIANCE SHOULD BE DELAYED UNTIL THE ACTUAL TALKS, AS DISTINCT FROM THE EXPLORATORY SESSIONS, BEGIN. IF THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE VII MUST BE TRIGGERED, WE WOULD PREFER THAT THE ICELAND GOVERNMENT WAIT AT LEAST UNTIL A CLEARER IDEA OF THE PACT NEGOTIATING POSITION HAS EMERGED; WE CONTINUE TO HOPE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF ICELAND CAN FULFILL ITS NEEDS WITHOUT ANY FORMAL REQUEST FOR THE APPLICATION OF ARTICLE VII. END FYI

3. IN DISCUSSING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MBFR AND THE IDF, EMBASSY SHOULD DRAW ON THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. IN HIS ADDRESS TO THE CONGRESS FOLLOWING THE MOSCOW SUMMIT, PRESIDENT NIXON NOTED THAT"... WE MUST STAND STEADFASTLY WITH OUR NATO PARTNERS IF NEGOTIATIONS LEADING TO A NEW DETENTE AND A MUTUAL REDUCTION OF FORCES IN EUROPE ARE TO BE PRODUCTIVE. MAINTAINING THE STRENGTH, INTEGRITY AND STEADFASTNESS OF OUR FREE WORLD ALLIANCES IS THE FOUNDATION ON WHICH ALL OF OUR OTHER INITIATIVES FOR PEACE AND SECURITY IN THE WORLD MUST REST." ANY REDUCTION OF THE ALLIANCE'S CAPABILITIES, WHETHER IN DEFENSIVE FORCES OR IN SURVEILLANCE, WEAKENS THE BARGAINING POSITION OF THE ALLIANCE AS WE ARE NO LONGER BARGAINING FROM A POSITION OF STRENGTH.

B. A CHANGE IN THE STATUS OF THE IDF WOULD BE WIDELY INTERPRETED BY THE OTHER SIDE AS A SIGN OF ALLIED DISUNITY OVER AN IMPORTANT SECURITY ISSUE. THIS IN TURN WOULD UNDERMINE THE CREDIBILITY OF A UNITED AND COHESIVE ALLIANCE CAPABLE OF SPEAKING TO THE PACT NATIONS WITH A SINGLE VOICE.

C. WORST OF ALL, THE OTHER SIDE COULD INTERPRET A DISAGREEMENT ON THE IDF WITHIN THE ALLIANCE AS EVIDENCE THAT ADDITIONAL DEGRADATIONS IN ALLIANCE CAPABILITIES WOULD OCCUR AS A MATTER OF COURSE, THIS WOULD ENTIRELY ELIMINATE THEIR INCENTIVE TO NEGOTIATE SINCE, IN THEIR PERCEPTION, THEY MIGHT EXPECT THAT TIME ALONE WOULD BRING ABOUT MORE FAVORABLE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 070262

RESULTS THAN THEY COULD HOPE TO ACHIEVE THROUGH

NEGOTIATIONS.

D. AS EMBASSY NOTED, MBFR WAS LAUNCHED AT REYKJAVIK AS A SERIOUS ATTEMPT BY NATO TO DEAL WITH THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL ISSUE OF DETENTE - THE LEVEL OF FORCES FACING EACH OTHER BETWEEN EAST AND WEST. PROGRESS TOWARDS MBFR COULD NOT HAVE TAKEN PLACE WITHOUT A REASONABLE DEGREE OF STABILITY OF FORCES THROUGHOUT THE ALLIANCE AREA. NATO COULD NOT CONTEMPLATE REDUCTIONS IN THE CENTRAL REGION IF THE SECURITY SITUATION IN OTHER AREAS COVERED BY THE TREATY WERE DECLINING. BY PROVIDING A MONITORING CAPABILITY NECESSARY FOR MUTUAL DETERRENCE, AND BY MAINTAINING A FORCE PRESENCE IN THE CRITICAL NORTH ATLANTIC

THE IDF PLAYS ITS VITAL ROLE.

E. IN PARTICULAR, BECAUSE OF THE REINFORCEMENT AND MOBILIZATION ADVANTAGES POSSESSED BY THE OTHER SIDE AS A CONSEQUENCE OF THE GEOGRAPHIC PROXIMITY OF THE SOVIET UNION, NATO'S ABILITY TO SUPPLY ITSELF AND TO PROTECT ITS LINES OF COMMUNICATIONS WITH NORTH AMERICA MUST NOT BE THREATENED. PROTECTION OF THE AIR AND SEA LANES OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC IS, THEREFORE, ONE OF THE PRIORITY TASKS OF THE ALLIANCE. IF AN UNCHECKED THREAT TO THESE AIR AND SEA LANES EXISTS, OR IF WE ARE UNABLE TO VERIFY WHETHER OR NOT SUCH A THREAT EXISTS, THE MILITARY SITUATION IN CENTRAL EUROPE WOULD REQUIRE THE PRESENCE OF MORE RATHER THAN LESS FORCES. IN SHORT, MBFR WOULD BE GRAVELY JEOPARDIZED.

4. DEPARTMENT HAS REVIEWED LEGAL QUESTIONS RAISED REFTEL. IF ARTICLE VII IS INVOKED AND THE REQUIRED NOTICE GIVEN, THE TIME PERIODS SET FORTH IN THE AGREEMENTS WOULD BEGIN: I. E., AT ANY TIME AFTER SIX MONTHS FROM NOTICE OF REQUEST FOR A COUNCIL STUDY UNDER ARTICLE VII, THE AGREEMENT COULD BE TERMINATED BY GIVING ONE YEAR'S NOTICE. IN OUR VIEW, HOWEVER, ARTICLE VII OF US- ICELANDIC AGREEMENT SHOULD NOT BE INTERPRETED AS REQUIRING ALL SUBMISSIONS TO NATO ON THE IDF QUESTION TO BE WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK
SECRET

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PAGE 04 STATE 070262

OF THAT ARTICLE. ICELAND AND THE US ARE FREE, AT ANY TIME, TO REQUEST NATO STUDY WITHOUT INVOKING ARTICLE VII. NATO STUDY CAN, THEREFORE, BE PHAM, HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS;
REP. EDWARD J. DERWINSKI, HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN

AFFAIRS;

RED. W. S.(BILL) STUCKEY, HOUSE COMMITTEE ON INTERSTATE
AND FOREIGN COMMERCE;

REP. LEE H. HAMILTON, HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS;

MR. DARRELL ST. CLAIRE, STAFF, HOUSE COMMITTEE ON BANKING,
HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS;

MRS. OCTA T. WATSON, HOUSE COMMITTEE ON BANKING, HOUSING
AND URBAN AFFAIRS;

MISS MILRAE JENSEN, SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE.

2. FURTHER AUTHORIZATIONS WILL FOLLOW SEPT. ROGERS

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